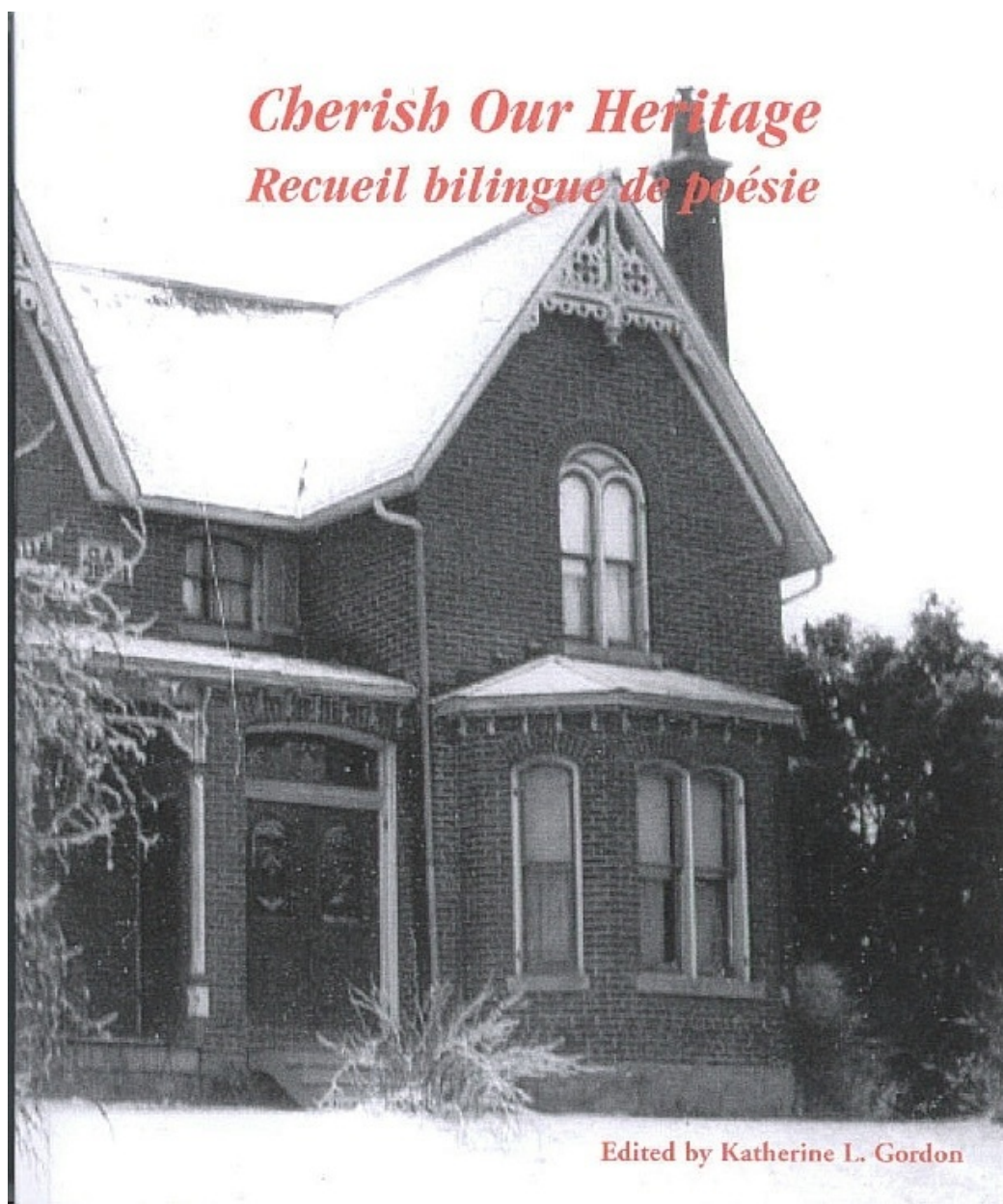


Cherish Our Heritage
Recueil bilingue de poésie



Edited by Katherine L. Gordon

Cherish Our Heritage

Bilingual Poetry Anthology

Katherine L. Gordon Editor
Wayne Ray Production Editor
English Language Judge Katherine L. Gordon
French Language Judge Anna Panunto

**THE ONTARIO
TRILLIUM FOUNDATION**



**LA FONDATION
TRILLIUM DE L'ONTARIO**



**HMS
PRESS**

HMS Press: Electronic Books In Print
POB 340 Station B
London Ontario N6A 4W1

literarynewscpa@yahoo.ca
available at the Electronic Bookstore:

ISBN 1-55253-056-6

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION

Cherish our heritage : bilingual poetry anthology
/ edited by Katherine L. Gordon.

Text in English and French.
Co-published by: Ontario Poetry Society.
ISBN 1-55253-056-6

1. Canadian poetry (English)--Ontario. 2. Canadian poetry (French)--Ontario. 3. Canadian poetry (English)--21st century. 4. Canadian poetry (French)--21st century. I. Gordon, Katherine L II. Panunto, Anna Maria, 1969- III. Ontario Poetry Society.

PS8295.5.O5C55 2004 C811'.60809713 C2004-903939-3E

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1. Poésie canadienne-anglaise--Ontario. 2. Poésie canadienne-française--Ontario. 3. Poésie canadienne-anglaise--21e siècle. 4. Poésie canadienne-française--21e siècle. I. Gordon, Katherine L. II. Panunto, Anna Maria, 1969- III. Ontario Poetry Society.

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Preface: Cherish Our Heritage

By Katherine L. Gordon

Editor.

The forces that shaped us
hammer through this book,
the fires of that forge still alight.
Our contemporary poets have captured
the resonance of the forefathers
in the burden and the beauty
of founding a land.
Peoples long here were usually overlooked,
occasionally cultural gold was gleaned
from their long history.
We owe them a great debt.
Many died for and of this country.
Others lived for it.
The Canada thus shaped roars in us all.
Building a country is a passionate adventure.
Squandering such a hard-won legacy
is hinted at in some of the present-day reflections
expressed here in poetry, exploring the peoples,
architecture, land and water once so prized.
Learning to cherish and inform ourselves
of this time-trust is the goal of this work.

Katherine L. Gordon.

Introduction

It was an honour to have been selected as the French language judge for TOP’S 2004, “Cherish Our Heritage Bilingual Poetry Anthology Competition”. As a proud Canadian poet living in Quebec, I embrace my Canadian identity on a linguistic, cultural, and socio-political level. I was both moved and impressed by the cultural richness and linguistic versatility of every poem submitted. I extend my congratulations to the winning poets, but also wish to thank all contributors for their wonderful submissions.

Anna Panunto, Montreal Quebec

C'était un honneur d'avoir été choisie comme juge de langue française pour le concours TOPS 2004, "Cherish Our Heritage Bilingual Poetry Anthology Competition". Fièvre d'être poète canadien vivant au Québec, j'accepte mon identité canadienne aux niveaux linguistique, culturel et socio-politique. J'ai été très touchée et impressionnée par la richesse de la culture et la versatilité de l'écriture de chaque poème soumis. Je tiens à féliciter les poètes qui ont remporté le concours mais je tiens aussi à remercier tous les participants pour leur merveilleuse contribution à ce concours.

Anna Panunto, Montreal Quebec

Acknowledgment

**We would like to gratefully acknowledge the support of
The Ontario Trillium Foundation.**



SECTION ONE A HIGH PRICE FOR HISTORY



James Deahl

Smith's Knoll

The life of the dead is placed in the memory of the living.

Cicero

It is from Manchester they came,
from Birmingham, from Sheffield
ploughboys released from their land
by the enclosures or
the unneeded children of the industrial poor
with nothing to do but starve.
With no plough to follow, no sheep to herd,
they followed their empty stomachs
across a land that no longer wanted them
into an urban dark that could not use them.
Eventually those who had not died
signed on to march for their Hanoverian King
in exchange for his promise
of a pound of meat and a loaf of bread per day.

So one day they marched into this
maple and elm wilderness on the edge

of a lake great as a sea,
and knew not where they were or why,
marching in wool on a hot June day
in a bath of sweat and mosquitoes.

Or they came from Kentucky or Virginia;
freckle-faced farm lads after adventure
or searching out a better future
in the territory north of the Great Lakes.
They found this field and pitched camp
by a creek with a wild rose border
almost ready to bloom, and the sweet scent
of flowering black locust spread over all.
For they were young men in the summer
of their lives, happy, perhaps,
as young men usually are to be alive
and on the move.

And yet they were surprised out of their lives
in the night of their sleep by the silent bayonet
or a hatchet releasing the brain's heartwood
from its dome of bone. Then the darkness was ablaze

with a confusion of musket fire so that
ploughboy clutched ploughboy
as they fell together into this anonymous spot
leaving their names behind, leaving
their pumping blood to sanctify this land
the sons of Wiltshire and the sons
of the Blue Grass State
joined in Death's brotherhood.

All that was known to mothers
and sweethearts in England and America
was this: some returned from Upper Canada,
some did not.
And in the funeral earth
they lay these fleeting generations
without names or nations, unprayed for,
a jumble of marrowless bones
where wild roses are about to bloom
and robins call and the mosquitoes
winnow the summer air.

So we gather here this Sunday morning
one hundred and eighty-seven years
after American cannon fired from this knoll
to deliver, so prematurely, the souls
of young men to their maker.
Perhaps their soldiers' spirits see us now
as we stand ambiguous at their fresh grave:
Lieutenant Colonel Bob Barnes of the King's Regiment,
Major Simon Bailey, Royal Gloucestershire,
Berkshire, and Wiltshire Regiment,
Colonel Karen McClellan, United States Army,
Lieutenant Colonel Rick Mount Pleasant,
Canadian Forces ‹ and this poet, citizen
of the United States, yet loyal subject
of Queen Elizabeth II ‹and just perhaps
the dead can hear *Last Post* and *Taps* played
while the single wooden box of bones,
draped in the flags of two nations,
containing the only remains of
“about” twenty-one men,
is finally buried in consecrated ground.

As we pray their souls
towards heaven's peace,
we understand that we are as ambiguous
as these lost boys, who fell as enemies
to lie as brothers in their common coffin.
With our silent thoughts, and even our tears,
these soldiers of forgotten identity,
uncertain nationality, undocumented purpose
lie now and forever
in the wild rose shade.

James Deahl

**Driving Across Land Settled By The Loyalists One Week Before
Thanksgiving**

for Simon Diehl, my great-great-great uncle

1.

A poor year for crops, the spring late, the summer
too short, too wet. Now the corn stands stunted
beyond a ditch of cattails, a paler brown and no taller
as the sun rises like some severe god.

2.

In this ground the first Methodists lie
under a coolness of pines younger than their graves.
The Republic they fled lies visible and sullen,
separated from them only by the autumn river.

3.

Every place has its story and the story here
is one of rocks and endless winters.
What were Simon Diehl's thoughts on confronting his land,
the St. Lawrence at his back, his new life waiting?

John B. Lee

The Mission of Angels to the Neutral Nation

What of a people silenced by time
like chastened children sitting in Sunday chairs?
The deeper the gravity the less they tell
in the ossuary where Neutrals lie
among catlinite beads
banged kettle brass, hammer stones
conch-shell pendants and gorgets -
these blacken-faced people of braceletted bones
these dead souls
lost tongued and quiet though
kitchen dumps and mud-cat spines
and carp and brass-ribbed middens, ash-beds of the age
shout and claw the air
tangled like maple roots cut into ploughshares.
And that village there
below the city
in ripples of clay
where Mudd Creek and Fairchild meet and mix their waters

like the rich conversation
of philosophers

I dream of
that place once called 'Kandoucho'
"all saints village" in Attiwandaron tongue
that place called "Notre Dame des Anges"
by the friars of the Recollects.

I dream of
Father La Roche Daillon
of the scoundrel Étienne Brûlé
of the map maker Sanson
of Champlain
and all the other obliterated travellers of time.

Voltaire said
'history is a trick the living play on the dead'
and though the pre-historic Neutral Nation
expires and is subsumed
and though the transitory journeying
of Gallic voices

has wintered in a siege of pines
has summered
in bird call grieving the ghost of trees
sung their songs in smoky branches
of maple, birch, beech, linden
basswood, oak, ash, elm
walnut, swamp maple
willow elder, and all
the Latin declensions of wind's ululating loss.

And my city, my brave Brantford
plays this trick on the dead:
if they have not lived
they have not died -
their bones a lie lying together
in graves.
We've murdered their ghosts
though we hold their ghosts in our mouths
like a cough of smoke.

I.B. Iskov
Cattle Country

they herd toward dwindling
high ground, buffalo with mud
grizzled and bent
refugees in the sacrificial badlands
of Alberta
stars could not eclipse
the wandering
useless fury on an empty sea
the terrain and clouds touch and die
thunderous winds blow
wild half-insane
in the midst of Creation
with a spiritual heritage all their own
they wander the pulse of Nature's soul
naked nomads on the muscled
aching wind-tossed prairies
rumpled leaden images rend
sharp distances
while some almighty hand

slaps the empty air with rage
the unofficial history: bloated figures
nibble on the surface of time
in a tender existence
without swallows
the low-hung ceiling distends
the primordial horizon
the reckless grey freedom of the bison
barbed by silence pure and pale
in the arms of evening
cluster beneath the remote endangered sky
brave the wake of day
in the struggling autumn

Jacqueline Borowick

Le Chant du Coucou

coucou:...oiseau qui pond ses œufs

dans le nid des bruants, des

bergeronnettes, des fauvettes (petit Robert)

Enfant délaissé

dans un nid étranger,

provenance, ethnicité

à jamais réattribuées.

Ni plus, ni moins

que la loterie biologique.

Mieux qu'être rebuté

au centre de distribution de bébés,

mieux que le déracinement fréquent

des foyers nourriciers.

Jadis,
la piste effacée,
la boîte de Pandore sous clef.

Certains se sont réconciliés
aux parents qui leur ont été dédiés.
D'autres entreprennent
des recherches généalogiques
pour repérer la parenté,
incarnent en chair et en os
les indiscretions du passé.

Se demandent-ils parfois,
enfants abandonnés,
à quel point le destin les a réinventés?
La voix du sang murmure-t-elle
dans le silence de la nuit?

Vanna Tessier

de Champlain: a Visit to St. Croix Island

wind whipping crests
black waves
crashing against the sides of a ship
crossing the Atlantic
the salty scent of freedom
 a promise
sailing
the seasick crew
watching the ebbing flow
scarlet-veined rocks
fingers pointing to the truth
 the blessed
 terra firma
wet grains of sand
measuring the role/roll of dice
the meaning of language
 murmur of a shell
spreading across the island
where history crams images

etching the future into our minds

mystery

a mist bleaching the horizon

present angst

hindsight

in the winter of 1604-05

howling night

blowing bone-dry cold

brushing anger against stone

eroding years from lives

due to lack of vitamin C

an outbreak of scurvy

or mal de la terre

stalks de Champlain's men

out of 79 men

36 could make it with him

across the ice

some of them cut their links with reality

waiting for another chance

until their gambling pays off

James Deahl

Husk

After the first hard frost

farmers enter upon their frozen land

to bring in the year's feed corn.

Along rough county roads

draught horses plunge in heavy air,

forged shoes striking congealed ruts.

Stalks rustle in the wind's teeth

brittle with the scent of snow.

Through the long dusk the grain

is dragged by solitary workmen

to barns that lean red

into the blood of a harvest sky.

All autumn the men go
silent among the ragged trees that
mark off field from hand-worked field.
Stiff with sleep they dream of corn,
dream of that bullet of frost
lodged in the heart of every kernel,
of the dead weight of each iron
ear in the shucking hands.

Vanna Tessier
at Head-Smashed-In

a crop of dark clouds
slicing across
the purple streak of the horizon
hooves beating
the kettledrum
notes from the wilderness
promise
a stormy jump
off a blood-red cliff

a silver-speckled blade of sandstone
the last frontier
glittering eyes
watching the stampede
from Buffalo Jump
fate speeding up
a fatal blow
pushing you over the edge

rocks
biting into skulls & bones
framing
the past gnawing at tomorrow

erasing yesterday
identity
a driving presence

chiselling anger
angst
what you forgot to say
listening to the rumble
of stampeding bison

wind gusts
blowing
rainclouds
a blood bet
brooding
over Head-Smashed-In

Jacqueline Borowick

Cigales et Fourmis

De la cigale si mal servie
je m’inquiète depuis longtemps.
Est-elle morte affamée ou bien
a-t-elle dansé sur l’étang congelé,
fait des pirouettes dans les champs enneigés?

De sa descendance,
les troubadours chantent le beau temps
sur leurs cordes d’instruments,
entonnent des contes d’hommes et d’amour,
de peines et de combats.

Se glisse parmi eux la gent de rue—
clochards, malades, voyous crottés,
cigarette au bec collée ou encore,
accompagnés d’un chien qui quête
avec triste mine et l’air abattu.

Dépourvus ou imprévoyants,
chacun a sa longue histoire.
Passons tout droit ou offrons des sous—
mais le mépris, sans contredit,
est digne de fourni.

Wayne M. Brown
Canadian History Lesson 1608 - 2004

cadence
-gin-
cali ous cat-
ar-
act
-s
canoes Cayuga
cathedrals candles catechism calico
carbi-n-e-s / cannon a-d-e-s / carn - age (captives)
Kanata quebecq
Canadian Canad-IEN
cacophony
C a n a d a

Wayne M. Brown

At The Grave Site

for W.O. Mitchell (1914-1998)

don't look for him here
concrete will not hold him go
to Crocus and listen to the wind
careless in the prairie grass listen
for boys' voices, excited, pouring water
down gopher holes watch for bare butt
moons rising in the Little Souris River
(one will be Bill's) seek him in back yards
bare knees down in the hot dust, his
shooter thumbflicking cat's eyes and milkers
out of the magic circle or building stilts
or flying long-tailed kites
to catch the clouds
he is not here maybe he's at Lobbidy's
or the pool hall with Liar and Musgrave
listening to King Motherwell, chewing
on black licorice plugs bought with
gopher tails --- they will be deciding who

can spit the furthest, with the best technique:
side of the mouth screwed up nonchalantly
a tight stream of juice propelled
toward the target look for him
where it's always summer holidays
and prairie, always prairie
when you begin to notice
wind stirring the foxtails
begin recognizing the anticipatory stillness
before a summer storm
when you start thinking about the fact that
things you love change and die, and
wonder sometimes if you can see the wind
then you'll know you are
on the right track you'll know
you are getting close
to finding him

Tracy Lynn Repchuk

Maiden Voyage

Sole indigent on a quest for purpose
leather that curled his toes, bread and butter diet, army duty encounter
burdened anchor raised, continuous waves unfold mutated uncertainties
two boys desperately cling to their mothers colourless skirt
bow steadfast, he sets course for the Great White North.

Inherent philosophies sanctioned his actions
pocket change and a selected city his only comforts
an abandoned spouse with confused souls diligently waits
six months was a lifetime for the fatherless toddlers
all hands on deck, a command from the bridge, and they too bid farewell.

Praying this path would not be a memorable regret
tiny sea legs board the dubious plank of the ubiquitous vessel
turbulent ocean and furious storms add to the unbearable journey
a mythical land and a beaten shack inappropriately called home
father and sons without the tools to reconnect.

Struggling passages embroiled in mendacious belief
countless questions buried fathoms deep under a watery berth
transcending proof emerges and the rhythmic family flow is stabilized
the birth of the first generation Canadian blossomed in spring
with daughter in his arms his destiny began to materialize.

Opportunistically controlled thought, navigated by aspirations
captains of industry, passionate siblings express their gratitude
pioneering parents witness the manifestation of their dreams
driven by an ethereal knowing to explore new territory
it is the courageous who venture beyond their maiden voyage.

James Deahl

Witness

Snow swept in today
to bury the browns
of a winter's afternoon.

These are the vast storms
born far in the wheat-lands.
They cross a thousand barren miles
to reach these lowland fields.

A century and a half past
the first Loyalists
entered this valley.

Here they founded an Anglican church,
raised a building
to house an Orange Lodge,
set out their cemetery.

I have seen their stones
leaning white into
the whiteness of Prairie storms.

Norma Linder

Debts Unpaid

Breath of settlers' children
warmed our one-room schools
scent of wet wool
frost-flowered window panes
blank faces waiting
to be mapped with knowledge
We, their descendants learned
to fashion maps
of water, salt, and flour
moulded Laurentian Shield
painted it pink
learned about Britain's wars
learned how to think
The music of Niagara
falls rhythmic from our tongues

We feel the Native Spirits of the Past
Muskoka, Mississauga, Manitoulin, Nipissing...
Too numerous to list
these gifts that last
Cadence of First Nation names
is something we hold dear
yet land claims go unsettled
year after trying year

James Deahl
Pleasures Of The North

north at midnight
the tarred road's a silent tongue.
To either side black marshes fill
hollows in the rocky skull
of a land scarred by glaciers.

The Wendat elders said an ice mountain
walked across their land,
but the French refused to believe.
A topography so stark only lichen
clutches these fierce outcroppings.

Yet so many flowers at water's edge <
white arrowhead, white water-lily,
the delicate water-pepper,
purple pickerelweed <
more than my book could name!

Joan McGuire

Almost

Only the cattle are gone,
and the men who pitched hay
in summer's broil

These rivers, trees,
these timeless hills,
these survivors lasting
beyond urban sprawl, basking
in birdsong and cricket-hum
remain as I remember

That cow skull we found once
baking in rocks...

The hills undulate,
waving grass like the sea
when you stand alone
holding eternity
wiped clean

Sing to me, fields of summer,
sing in my bones.
Wind, whiffle through me
like grass

Alone in these hills
I'm part of forever

Almost
I can accept death

Anna Panunto

Le Langage

Au fur et à mesure
que je prononce
des mots intelligibles,
ma langue me trahit.
Ma bouche, faisant les gestes
appropriés,
me trompe.

Emprisonnée dans mon propre
langage,
j'en entame un autre.

Maintenant

il est facile de réfléchir
aux polémiques du monde.

Ma muse me permet
de m'engager
dans toutes formes de discours.

Des paroles délivrantes
s'échappent
de ma voix éclairée.
Cependant d'une manière
ou d'une autre, son génie
m'a éblouie jusqu'à
l'immobilité.

Hope Morritt

to Dan_

who worked on the ill-fated

Ocean Ranger – 1981 – '82

weep Dan weep

to wake the holocaust

the drilling platform

Ocean Ranger exploding

north Atlantic fury

yesterday you watched

rescue planes

buffeted by screaming gales

empty rafts tossing ghost-like

stark memories of co-workers

eighty-four all gone

yet you safe...belting rum

the phone echoing a requiem

in the rum-hollow of your soul

you wonder if they suffered

the young diver with blue eyes

his girl a picture postcard

of smiles and sun-burst hair

the moody engineer strumming soul music

haunting melodies drifting

grieve Dan grieve

for the drilling rig

the wild sea monster

stalking *The Grand Banks*

engines blasting/ lights pulsing

rising thirty-one stories

synchronized by stars

UNSINKABLE though howling gales rape

and plunder

yesterday you watched
as balance anchors pulled
stars short-circuited
steel-on-steel clashed &
she split/vomited contents
of her womb into wintry sea

soul music lingers
incense on the drift of night
weep Dan weep

Peggy Fletcher

Candlelight Vigil for a Montreal Massacre

Draw cold un-glossy circles around truth
place roses at the foot of urban night
honor the murdered souls, the ardent few

they brought us to this edge, left no adieus
a catalogue of pain, uncertain life
draw cold un-glossy circles around truth

young women targeted for their pursuit
of engineering goals, their equal right
honor the murdered souls, courageous few

each day they studied blueprints, earned more proof
that scholarship and dreams might soon unite
draw cold un-glossy circles around truth

these fourteen lives snuffed out, their shattered youth
is symbolized by flowers, candlelight
honor the murdered souls, the chosen few

with annual hurt, we visit grief anew
mouth prayers, hold hands, let tears be our respite
draw cold continuous circles around truth
honor those murdered souls, say no adieus.

Richard I. Thorman

Their Legacy, Our Freedom

Let your thoughts stand in sombre reverie
as over one hundred and sixteen thousand
shadowy faces of twentieth century dead
young Canadian military personnel
pass in review.

Suppose every Canadian writer
undertook to write fictional stories
of the life of each of these men
and women as they might
have been from sea to sea and
north and south in full multicultural
and individual uniqueness.

Do you think that then we might begin
to comprehend their sacrifice?

Visit the tomb of the Unknown
Soldier, le Soldat Inconnu,
at the National War Memorial
in Ottawa and place your hand
atop the grey granite sarcophagus

with sculpted bronze helmet
and sword, and contemplate
the young man we will never
know and should never forget,
one whose legacy is our freedom
and future as Canadians.

Katherine L. Gordon

La Lumière des Ancêtres

La lune se glisse par les fenêtres,
se répand sur le lit et le vieux plancher.
Je souris à soeur lune
et rêve aux ancêtres
qui m'ont donné cette terre
avec tous ses plaisirs,
en vivant leur vie,
et spécialement la liberté.
Leurs larmes ont arrosé les champs
pendant qu'augmentait leur ardeur.
Mais la lumière de leurs travaux
et de leurs rêves
brille plus fort dans ma mémoire
que les étoiles.

Gill Foss

Le Réveil

Je suis suspendue entre
le bleu et le vert, sans poids,
parmi les brumes scintillantes du lac qui s'éveille.
Elles m'enveloppent.
Les soucis peuvent m'attendre
pendant que je me perds dans le silence de ce mystère.
Je sens la liberté de la lumière
et les cris sauvages de l'huard me réjouissent.
Une paix ancienne s'écoule dans mon âme
et je m'unis au ciel et à la terre -
un esprit seulement, que l'âge et le temps ne touchent point.
Je suis jeune, je suis vieille,
je suis plus âgée que les siècles mêmes.
Mon âme se tient nue en face du monde
mais lavée de paix.
Je passe par les rides scintillantes jusqu'à la réalité
pour m'asseoir sous les arbres où reste encore la fraîcheur de l'aube.
J'ai senti l'excitation des éveils:
et pendant un instant, j'ai vu plus loin que la solitude des rêves.

Joan McGuire

Remembrance

We laughed along the beach, enjoying the sun.
We knew that overseas soldiers were dying,
but it was summertime, and we were young.

We'd heard some anxious jokes about "the hun",
read bits of news, and heard our parents sighing,
yet we lay on the beach enjoying the sun.

"There's nothing we can do, so let's have fun.
Let our parents worry", we said, denying,
for it was summertime, and we were young.

And there were battles lost, and battles won.
Over England, German planes were flying,
as we sang on the beach, enjoying the sun.

The newsreels showed us bombings, tanks and guns,
houses wrecked, mothers, children, crying.
But it was summertime. We were still young.

Lists of the missing grew; lovers, sons.
Families afraid to hope, although still trying.
But they lay on foreign beaches, in harsh sun,
as it was summertime. And they were young.

Nancy Morrey

Dieppe

It was a pebbled beach
with stones the size of cabbages
pebbles that shattered bones and bodies
in the order they fell
as men struggled forward
in the shifting shuddering mass.

Hundreds captured-marched away
limped away dragged away.
Nearly a thousand
left on the beach-silent, lifeless
deemed unworthy of enemy scrutiny.

In the night as the guns cooled

shattered fingers held the line.
A pledge was made
to the aching earth
that fallen Canadian
sons would never die.

1944: out of the mist and waves
into the slaughter one more time
the second assault strode across
the backs of the fallen
who never flinched or waived.

Shoulder to shoulder they fed their spirit
to their younger brothers' victory.

It was a pebbled beach
with stones the size of cabbages
pebbles that shattered bones and bodies
in the order they fell.

They were our sons.
It was our Dieppe.

Ronnie R. Brown

Jack and the Beanstalk Part II (And The Beanstalk)

She is tearing up
an old bed sheet. Ripping
strips that will soon
tie tomato plants, heavy
with bounty, to the stakes
she's fashioned out of branches,
victims of last season's ice storm.
Her daughter, ancient
at twenty three, can not understand
why she wastes her time this way.
Why all this ripping and whittling
when garden stores sell
everything--all sorts of plastic
this and that--which, her daughter knows,
will work better, look nicer.

One day, years from now
she will tell her about the hours
she spent as a child in the Ottawa Valley
helping her mother and grandmother, of the countless
generations of Ontario women; the untold
hours of tearing, whittling, staking, weeding
picking, cooking, canning, serving.
Explain how every time
she drives a stake, ties
a beanstalk she
can almost see the family
farm her grandmother used to describe, hear
the voices of all the women
who came before
urging her on.

.

Jill Battson

Bone Box

Where poetry wings off the breast
single chill in the limestone house
boxes hold bones, an ossuary of remembrances
alabaster embracing the cremated beach coral of a beloved dog
glass spice jar with ashes of two parents, mixed
cardboard box held safe by a rubber band
first budgerigar skeleton
boxes with milk teeth of babies and puppies
all contained within a large stone box
the ossuary of life's history
we use houses to catalogue the paths of existence
where poetry is crushed by a breast on canvas
a chill in the limestone house.

Katherine L. Gordon

Martian Music

Red dust sings in the blood,
miles of star-slivered space
netting us back
as salmon in a fiery sea
floundering in little tin ships
to find our beginnings,
ancestral graves
in dried red beds.
Our loneliness keen
as the genocide of Earth
inflames the obsession
to rejoin anything of source
lost beauty and meaning
the anthem we need
to survive.

SECTION TWO
INSIGHTS IN SEASONS



Joan McGuire

January

Morning of waking wrath.
Dream-blasted dawning,
demiurgical scream.
Angry Arctic ghosts
swirl across field and forest,
slash faces, shudder backs.
Shamou, part husky,
wild with winter, bounds
through snowbanks, leaps
hills, finding in windhowl
the roots of her bones,
and I, gusted between
push and pull,
animal exuberance
and lashing wind-breath,
dissolve in wonder
at our frailty against
primeval power.

Scott, Franklin,
Jack London's tales...
I hope, downhill
beyond the whipping snow
our house still stands.

Jacqueline Borowick

Haïku

Le papillon nage dans l'espace
S'agrippe à une branche
Déploie ses ailes tatouées

Un oiseau-mouche
Darde les fleurs
Vole leurs douceurs

Le vent d'automne
Secoue les branches
S'empare de leur toison dorée

Sheila Martindale

In the Laurentides

February
the paths through
the mountains
treacherous
to my city boots

Crystal needles
of pine
shining
in the glare
of the cold sun

Mirage of islands
merging with
mountain backdrop

Icicles -
stalactites
in the open cave
of the shore

I lean on your arm
step gratefully
on the sand
you sprinkle
at my feet

Jill Battson

Whale Weather

In the long grass, brown with the harshness of winter
feet sink in snow, rafted by the matted, blown layers
barnwood-grey branches, gnarled, loosely sheathed bark
squeak and moan in the tall wind
fragile dull green juniper, hint of masked purple
peeks through like a gin-buried treasure
red metal curve of sleigh rail clings to rotted wood
a curlicue hooking worm-eaten to the north
grey sun watering the clouds with a hint of brilliance

and on the lake, a frozen palate of tonal white
corralled snow rushes and swirls, skidding along the slick surface
ceases and begins, eddies and rests
the shoreline pushed up by the expanding freezing water
like halted waves, cracks and settles, tectonic plates of ice
Herculean and slowly unstoppable
several feet from shore I am rafted by the continuum
as the wind breathes, the lake speaks
wa wa, wa wa ing

a heartbeat along the surface, resounding under the ice
haunting and magnificent
a sound like whales calling under the ocean.

Gill Foss

Arachide

| | |
|--|--|
| Il s'assoit devant ma porte une noix entre ses pattes ses yeux noirs, vivaces. | Il s'élance contre un nouveau venu; s'empresse dans un jeu de cache-cache. |
| Il grignote, laissant tomber les écosses autour de lui, puis il en cherche d'autres. | Il saute de branche à branche, un jouet mécanique, pendant que les geais lui volent ses noix, inaperçus. |
| Il reluit noir et doux comme le velours, une créature agile et lisse à longue queue plumée. | Il se lave de ses pattes adroites - puis un chat noir arrive et mon écureuil s'enfuit. |

Wayne Ray

Anne Valavaara

This April winter has me bewildered,
sleet rain and the trees are ice laden,
falling down around town, chainsaws
reflected in the glassy branches.

When the noises of the city cease
and you close your eyes, let the cold wind
pink your cheeks, you can hear the
crack, crack, crack of the ice on wood.

This April winter has me remembering
a high school sweetheart, midwinter
freezing rain, near midnight and the city
under two inches of glass. Crunched walking
the sidewalk under near breaking wires
and trees. Walking her home hand in hand,
first kiss beneath the frozen moon.

Elana Wolff

Cohoe

Gull-grey glare
through French-door glass;
you out there
between me and the lake— somewhere
in community
with other men like you.

I have
so many good words here
I can't begin to grasp them.
Instead I watch the yachts on the water,
the homes on the hill,
the cloud-roll.

I went in rain this morning to walk,
bought a coffee
and wrote some notes.

Night is the appetite.

Woe is Poe.

Draw the curtains, then the gun.

*The lover is cover
and dust.*

*You always self-extinguish, Star,
before I get my wish in.*

What if
after this day of rain the sky, for sunset,
clears
& the disappearing
light appears
to colour the dusk
pink-cohoe.

We will surely hold our heads up
then, to grasp that canvas.
Open as an ear to seeing
union's
fugitive beauty.

Gill Foss

La Silencieuse

La vie creusée de mon coeur
me rend fantôme,
un corps sans âme
qui attend la tienne pour vivre encore.

Mais tu chantes autre part, ne me vois pas
donc il me faut glisser
silencieuse, au milieu du monde,
ombre fanée, comme les eaux en hiver,
froide, mourante, mais jamais morte.

Mets ton sourire dans mes yeux,
mets ta vie dans mon coeur
pour me laisser monter au ciel.

Jacqueline Borowick

The Cardinal

For James

I fell into wonderment
at my table one morning.
A cardinal perched
on the window-sill,
scanned the objects in my home
with unblinking attention.
Oh, how he honoured me.

In return for his song,
the privilege of contemplating him,
I invited him to pitch his tent
among the plants and flowers
on the green carpet of my balcony,
with three squares a day
of fancy grains on my best bone china.
He would not be swayed,
fled to the cathedral of a tree.

Or was it just vanity on his part—

a little red-plumed Narcissus

in the mirror of the glass,

immersed in the beauty of his reflection,

seduced by his own avian charms?

Gill Foss

Les Saisons au Jardin

jaunes dans la pelouse
vagabonds persistants
les pissenlits

le trésor caché
au bout de l'arc-en-ciel
un papillon monarque

sous l'érable
une mosaïque multicolore
feuilles d'automne

la lune
sur une branche enneigée
se couche.

T. Anders Carson

Sightings

Wheeling a TV,
smoke in mouth,
astride a bicycle
made even the trucker's
take a second glance.
I scurry past that entrancing
scene and fumble upon
our home.
A Danish friend of my mother
wanted to visit her grave.
I've always respected flower
giving.
She tells me a story
of her friend's young
boy who is 3.
They all went to the
zoo
to see the polar bears
being fed.

After the fish had been
gulped by the beast
the little one turned to her mom

and asked, “Why don’t they give
him his Coke?”

What assimilates into a
child’s mind
can be quite
frightening.

Gill Foss

Tu Pars

Tu pars
et mon âme
se couche
s'embrumée
de tristesse
comme un mort
enveloppé
de son linceul.

Tu pars
et mon esprit
se tient
désolé,
vide de joie
comme une vieille
qui réfléchit
aux temps passés.

Tu pars
et mon coeur
envoie un soupir
après toi.
Je me rappelle
ton amitié
et il me manque
ta sympathie.

I.B. Iskov

Comme un air de Fin de Nuit

Pour Andy Barrie

La longue attente

un peu affolée

aussi incroyable

qu'un air de cirque

tranchant et confus

Ainsi, dans le bleu

où une petite voix calme

s'évapore

s'avance

on croit rêver sa vie

Fragile comme le vent

tourbillon qui n'est qu'ombre

dans un reflet caché

exilé d'une peur lointaine

Je m'ennuie un peu

écoute CBC Radio me laisse

dévorer par les mots

le courant emporte la lune

douce lumière

comme un air de fin de nuit

Like an air at the End of Night

For Andy Barrie

Long waiting,

a little crazy

as incredible as

a circus air

clear cut and confused,

So, in the blue

where little voice

calm, vaporized,

comes forward

you think you dream your life

Fragile as the wind

turbulence is but a shadow

in a hidden reflection

exiled from a distant fear

I am almost bored

and listen to CBC Radio

devoured by the words

the current sweeps the moon away

smooth in the light

like an air at the end of night

Wayne Brown

Flirtation

This morning

although April is nearly done

snowflakes slide obliquely

past my window, dusting the trees

piling up against the fences

swept there by unseen hands

My resentment builds January to March

having presented themselves

record breaking mild, I am already

summer soft --- older now and

no longer able to toughen up

more than once a year for winter

But I should know better;

weather here

is seldom boring - always

a bit of a flirt and you

never know when

she might get serious

T. Anders Carson

Chantant La Chanson

Tout haut dans l'arbre,
un oiseau chante au vent.
C'est un vent léger
qui vient du sud
et souffle sur les feuilles.
Je connaissais ce vent
lorsque j'étais enfant,
lorsque mes parents vivaient
et que la télévision était en noir et blanc.
Je me souviens que je m'asseyais dans la cour d'en avant,
sous cet arbre,
le même arbre
que, chose étrange,
ma mère coupa
pour rendre la tonte du gazon plus facile.
J'avais l'habitude de m'asseoir sous ces branches bourgeonnantes
et regarder le ciel au-dessus du toit du voisin.
Toutes ces petites antennes recueillant quelque chose du ciel.
Toutes ces salles de jeux pleines d'enfants et de parents

qui ne se disaient pas un seul mot.

Le père se levait du sofa pour changer le canal
quand les programmes devenaient trop ennuyants.

Qu'est-il arrivé depuis ce temps?

Maintenant les couleurs sont vives.

Une télécommande nous permet de passer simultanément
à travers des dizaines de canaux.

Mais quelque chose fut perdu ce jour-là

lorsque l'arbre fut coupé,

lorsqu'on a cessé de voir notre père

se lever du sofa

pour changer le canal

pour trouver quelque chose de mieux.

Jacqueline Borowick

Snow Tales

I never knew tree names,
wildflowers, Northern birds,
spring-summer-fall quick
to leave this rocky place.

But I knew the snows.
Intimately.
Rolled them on my tongue,
tasted clouds,
wrapped myself in them,
a snowchild.

Built forts, igloos,
stockpiled snowballs,
whizzed down the hill
on scraps of linoleum.

I knew all the snow songs:
lacy whispers of snowflakes
loosed from the sky,
blizzard furies keening
on the wind,
the squeak of boots crunching
across white fields
ringed by stoic pine trees
rehearsing for spring

Gill Foss

À la Campagne

près du lac silencieux
l'hibou parmi les érables
un fantôme passant

un écho mystérieux
fait trembler ma solitude
l'huard dans la nuit

sous les arbres
le long du sentier
le printemps s'éveille

deux petits lapins
à l'abolement d'un chien
se font statues.

Wayne Ray

Mother's Day Fredericton 2003

Waiting for the spring rains
to clear the last of the snow,
and make way for the summer
this day is so cloudy cold.

Sipping Irish Cream at Second Cup
across the wet street from Goose Lane Editions,
thinking about younger brother born
half a century ago, this Mother's Day.

Not here to enjoy the East coast sun
or this heavy cleansing precipitation
or a loving Mother who remembers
what this day is really for; you and me.

If I close my eyes I see two boys
in an East Coast memory, running
home for lunch, from the beach
where she will always call our names.

Philomene Kocher

Sunlight

sunlight
through the frost on the window
Heritage Day

Philomene Kocher

The Remedy

the fragrance of the chamomile
touches me
even before I see the flowers
in the city garden

and I remember

the chamomile growing
in my father's garden
planted there years before
by his mother
to be harvested

and used as a remedy

and I remember

picking the blossoms as a little girl
(careful now, just the blossom -
no stem, it's too bitter)
and placing them on newspapers to dry
before being stored
on the top shelf

and I remember

my mother brewing the chamomile tea
(so strong because it was boiled) and
adding lots of sugar (the best part)
as the remedy for my upset stomach
knowing it would soothe
the hurting places

the fragrance of the chamomile
touches me still

Stella Mazur Preda

Talk to Me, Annie

Tell me of your father's letter
postmarked Canada
a desperate appeal
that the family join him
promises of opportunities
dreams to be fulfilled
yet you alone
were sent to indulge
a father's hopes.
Tell me of your mother's kiss
caressing cold tears
rivers of desperation
etched your cheeks
the touch of gentle hands
lingering like her scent of lilacs
and rose water, a breathless voice
among whispering winds
coos childhood lullabies.
Help me, Annie

to understand your fears
how you coped with unfamiliarity
rallied through enigmas
of a new culture
no one to comfort or share
desolate thoughts, lonely solitudes
no one hears the emptiness
of your silent cries.
Tell me, Annie
what grievous occurrences
scarred memories of this bleak voyage
yet effected your discreet determination
unbridled infinite strength
spirited laughter.
Help me comprehend why
you would never break
the silence of your odyssey.

Stella Mazur Preda

Sweet Childhood

We bounced and skipped
through summer raindrops,
laughing and giggling together
as sisters often do.
Our little dog Prince,
a constant companion,
romping by your side, yours
much more than mine.
I remember Niagara Falls
a world away, so it
childishly seemed; family picnics,
butterflies and flower gardens.
Playing “dress-up”
our aunt’s old clothes and hats
provided an exhilarating escape
for a child’s imagination.
Long nights filled with terror,
fears and nightmares
raged rampant in my mind

and we huddled for comfort.
Do you remember a backyard fence
we were allowed to paint,
silver paint that shone in the sun
sparkled like dewdrops on our faces?
I remember ice-skates, roller-skates
and playtimes in the park.
Uncle watching over his girls
always keeping us safe.
You remember Christmas holidays,
gifts piled under the tree,
trying to a child's patience, and then –
paper rips and squeals of joy.
Memories bloom and lingering
scents of childhood now sustain us.

April Bulmer

Moons

I am the first woman.
I dream of sea, earth and sky.
And I dream of giving birth:
of the toil of labour
and of the child
like a wet bird
hatching from me.
I am the first woman.
I dream of bulbs
and their blooms:
lonely and wise.

Jacqueline Borowick

La Tombée

Feuilles
fugitives
dansent
dans le vent
pirouettent
tracent
des arabesques
perdent
leur entrain
plongent
dou
ce
ment
vers la terre
pour la parer
d'or

SECTION 3

Canadian Places of the Heart



Elizabeth Symon

Mon Montréal

Quand vais-je te revoir,
Mon Montréal?
Si loin, hélas,
D'où j'habite.
Dans mes rêves
Je fais encore
Des promenades
Le long de tes belles rues.
Je vois tes édifices
D'un autre siècle
D'aujourd'hui aussi.
Et bien qu'éloignée
Je vois tes couleurs vives
D'automne et en hiver
Tes neiges profondes.
Au printemps je sens le parfum
De tes fleurs,
En été ton soleil

Me tient au chaud ici.
Quelle que soit la saison
J'attends le jour
De mon retour.
Qu'il soit bientôt!

Vanna Tessier

Blackmud Creek

her log cabin
perched high in the Rockies
wilderness map
a labyrinth of secrets
paths leading
where you had always wished to go

wild berries
a purple streamer of saskatoons
ripening along the creek
the blueprint of the earth
echoing
a violet-streaked season

she leans against a treestump
counts the roots sticking out
like a moose's antlers
nodding wisdom

dewdrops gleaming
on clumps of grass
the search for spring
gushing news
spilling downstream

tall lodgepole pines
scented tears of resin
the unknown
carving posterity
on pewter bark

tattooing her throat
cinnamon teal
looking for him
near Blackmud Creek
she flips her amulet
to the other side of fate

Karen P. Ouelette

Red Cedar Lake

Beneath untamed stars
I listen to whispers
of white forest-pines
of small ground creatures
invisible
to my evening eye.

For I am a ripple
alive
upon a restless dream
flash
of a fishermans oar
dripping blue —
wood that dips for dawn.

On the northern edge
of a secluded shore
I stand awake
waiting....

Dorothy Mahoney

Field Photo

one August
when the afternoon had ripened
into full bushel baskets of red tomatoes
we sat near the end
hands and knees grown green
sweat-streaked faces
my grandmother in a sleeveless shirt
her thick arms brown
worked hands open on faded denim thighs
we leaned towards her, listened
though now I could not say to what
when a car stopped at the road
a man took a picture and drove away
my grandmother laughed and laughed
I clearly remember wondering if one day
I would see it, surprised again
in a calendar or agricultural report
the sun beginning its descent on the distant farm
the field dotted red

like an impressionist piece, poppy-splashed
my sister and I at my grandmother's feet
with a byline that might read:

August, Ontario
summer near ending
tomatoes picked in intense heat

now a new October
a yellow field of rice
women wearing t-shirts
overlong-sleeved blouses
tied at the wrists
are bent cutting sheaves
their shoes left in a row
at the side of the road
where we have stopped to take a picture
their faces hidden under pale straw hats
the backdrop of mountain peaks
so different from flat tomato fields
October, Guangxi
harvest near ending
women in rice fields

Lenore Langs

Ambassador Bridge

Headed home on the 401 by night, by car,
crossing the flatness of Essex County,
still ten miles to the east of Windsor,
we see a starlike string of lights
suspended above the horizon.

It follows invisible cables
supporting the blackness
of girders and roadway lost
in the dark of river and sky.

Visible only briefly,
easy to miss on a cloudy or stormy night,
it tells us home is near.

Marie Groundwater

At Gaspé

The blue whales still come in
to the St. Lawrence
heaving like shadows
from northern seas
only just breaking the surface
of the gulf
their greater mass below
sinister and deep
one wakeful eye they cast
upon the rolling fields
fast flowing green along the banks
and bobbing houses of the habitants
that sparkle white
between each grassy rise
their roofs tin-topped like sails
of red and blue and yellow.

Est-ce qu'ils respondent a
ce beau salut?
Est-ce qu'ils parlent francais?

Leila Pepper

In Dieppe Park

As storm clouds gather
on this April day
how pleasing to the eye
a crimson cardinal
on golden forsythia!

Jacqueline Borowick

Adieu Colibri

Je t'attendais, petit colibri,
avec eau de sucre,
gouttes d'ambroisie,
mais hélas, tout l'été,
tu m'as rebutée.

Je voulais m'abreuver
de ta fragile beauté,
m'émerveiller devant
les arabesques
de ton vol picaresque.

C'était gentil à toi
de me faire tes adieux.
L'autre jour, suspendu
par tes ailes palpitantes,
tu as tourné un long moment
tout près de moi
comme pour t'excuser
de m'avoir ignorée.
Reviens à moi au printemps.

Ellen S. Jaffe

The Deer at Cootes Paradise

*I've been smiling, smiling, smiling, all the time, when I don't feel like smiling.
It goes back to the death of my husband.*

(Woman in her '60's, at swimming class, YWCA).

The deer and I look at each other,
fall into each other's eyes,
over a gulf of green
near Sassafras point.
I thought I'd taken the wrong path,
turned, returned, see him standing
by a dead tree,
sumach-soft young antlers
sprouting like branches
ears flaring at sounds I cannot hear,
carried on waves of evening light.
a mockingbird calls.

I stand still, like the deer,
trying not to breathe.
gradually we both get bolder,
I scratch a stray mosquito,
shift slightly, squat down in the cool earth
– the honey muscles of his back ripple
against the leaves.

We stay like this for minutes, for eternity
then he turns, white tail high, walks, stalks
slowly into the leaves (not running, not running)
disappears without a trace.
I look into the space
he leaves behind, the after-image
seeing his face,
the place his eyes had been
no fear, just
an opening
for grace.

Jacqueline Borowick
Au jardin de l'oubli
(pour Elise)

Derrière moi, tout s'efface—
le sentier disparaît sous mes pas.
Je trébuche,
moins allègre qu'autrefois.

La force de mon courage s'épuise,
prête à s'effondrer.
Mais, là-bas, un coin de verdure,
un oasis pour m'abreuver.

Je m'allonge sous un saule éploré
qui, tremblant, murmure ses secrets
d'oiseaux et de sérénades,
de ruisseaux enchantés.

Lasse,
je ferme les yeux et je rêve
et l'immensité autour de moi
m'étreint et se tait.

T. Anders Carson

Albany Blues

Albany blues
Rollicking down the runway of
walls,
my heart soars into cyber-space
with each neon flash.
Obscure visions of delight
helps sell box-sets of aging stars
at half price.
Being Canadian and looking
at gas stoves for price
differential tends
to sell a resigned nature of poetic
purchases.
Not recommending the falls
for barrel tumbling over,
they stop their idyllic chatter
and give glances unbeknownst
to the productive buyer.

We roll our R's
and fork over eh's
and slide peacefully down
that stapled path of
perfection.

Knowing when to chuckle or weep
is mastering emotional art
at its highest form.

Elizabeth Symon

L'édredon de Campagne

Des plumes douces et blanches
Tombent des nuages rembourrés
Et couvrent la froide terre
Vois cet édredon
Mis en lambeaux par le vent
Rapiécé de vert
Bientôt le terrain
Se pare d'une couette campagnarde
Parsemée de fleurs
Et peu après
Apparaît la bonne moisson
Dessus de lit d'or
Dépouillée alors
La terre nue reste découverte
Et froide sans son drap
Le cycle continue
Quand la neige revient encore
Et tout recommence

Malca Litovitz

Dundurn Castle

I sat on the edge of the lake
waiting to be lit from within;
peacocks in the children's zoo
furled their feathers -
turquoise like the walls in my mother's home.

On the parquet floor,
we danced to Monkee songs,
waved Bon Voyage streamers for Daisy.

She broke her heart
on her mother's butter knives and celery sticks,
heat waves and shattered mirrors
wrists could go through.
Floors splattered with blood
from children who ran too fast.

We covered the porch in iris leaves,
stashed Playboy centrefolds
in sewer hideouts,

Barbie's Dream House

crumpled and old.

Alice curls by the fire like her cat,
and the furniture moves in dreams.
The hall-light shines through a crack in the door
on the pages of *Narnia*
or a green copy of *Anne of Avonlea*
my mother read on Prairie doorsteps –
grain elevators and gopher holes
rising rich in recall
like the smell of oranges on trains.

Memories lie pressed like old tulips.

Ride to Dundurn Castle on your bicycle
pigtails flying like *Pippi Longstocking*
off to see her cannibal king.

Climb Hamilton Mountain,
and look out over the city in slumber,
pink pollution clouds enveloping your day.
Your underwear will turn green
if you fall into that lake.

Downtown, the old Birk's clock
revolves in nineteenth-century curlicues.
Go to the White Grill-
have a cherry coke and Chicken-on-a-Bun.
See the Christmas lights
gleam all year round in Gore Park.

Jog on Kent Street, Aberdeen, Dundurn
as if we're all Scottish –
Earl Kitchener, Ryerson,
evergreen trees.

See this Canadian landscape:
steel mills and big chain fences.
The richest house gilded with plastic pineapples.

Men carry their black boxed lunches
wearing the scruffy dungarees and lumber jackets
my grandfather sold
while my grandmother sewed and made him lunch –
tea with lemon between the teeth.

Take the children to the park to swing at dusk-
let them see the parrots in the Dundurn zoo.
Sit on the shore waiting for *Sound and Light*.

Malca Litovitz

First Day

My kindergarten sits at the foot of the street,
brown and covered in ivy.

I'm dropped at the door
where I meet a girl named Susan.

Her hair is short and her nose pointed,
like Peter Pan's. I love and mistrust her immediately.

"Peter Pointer, Peter Pointer".
There is a song for each finger.

A sleepy child, I look off to a corner
as if a star were to appear there - elsewhere.

I hear the piano, see the teacher's fuzzy hair,
the towel for napping covered in faded roses.

Walking home early,
I mistake recess for the end of the day.

Colette Couломbe

Amour Destructeur

L'amour m'a un jour donné des ailes
Pour venir me les brûler sans gêne
L'amour m'a réchauffé le cœur
Pour ensuite me l'arracher sans peur

L'amour m'a transportée aux nuages
Pour mieux me lancer sur le rivage
L'amour a ravi toute ma tendresse
Pour pouvoir me laisser en détresse

L'amour a trop pris mon cœur d'assaut
Pour le laisser saigner à flots
L'amour ne rira plus jamais de moi
Puisqu'il sera banni de mes joies

Allan Briesmaster

In the Coulee, Wanuskewin

Is it deeper now, this coulee, or have the bison bones
we're told lie here below the soil been inter-layered
by flows of leveling erosion, into the gentle shadows
of a thicket on the rise? It seems no archaeologic place.
The guide's witty tale, amusing his pale questioners,
about the funnel of spaced boulders and robed mimicker
of a distressed calf luring the great herd with hobble and cry
to the point where they'd be startled toward the brink,
seems merely that. A tale. With epilogue on how the Band
would warily slay the crippled beasts here, and cull everything -
hide, tool and thong - to thrive, and get through winter.

This warm afternoon, my thoughts flit to the overhang
of leaves that vibrates with a yellow warbler. A coulee
like this one, left to be, remains oasis in the drought-
prone, edgeless plane. A trough of ample bowls, green-treed
below the straw-crisp dun ... Today the level of the creek, though,
that makes all this, is dropping shallower than ever.
Across it, I note a solitary tree, thin and yet old,
stuck partway up the opposite slope, that puts a paltry few

withered green sprigs out. It is dying. Still, there is my breath-
catch for the teal, on the release of their cerulean-
patched wings. In midway air a kinglet tumbles. And where -
not even at Pelee - could I count to twenty citron warblers?
Aromatic bushes, in flower, closest by the creek ... will last.

How strangely far I've come toward the without-answer.
Wondering. Why would this hollowed space dimensionally run
so different from ravines I've known? One clue - the more elongate span
of Swainson's Hawk (that pair, on spiral updrafts)? Eastern streams
have also formed oases, under cities, with their Red-tails ... but ...
The secret must be the dry clarity, the vacant mass
and volume of unbroken, entire sky - great prairie sky -
stretching the so-much-farther-off horizon, wholly live
above the dusty grass, and precious greens and fluid,
with the interminable slow stampede of clouds.

Jill Battson

36 Reasons Why I Want to Grow a Garden

Because I want to plunge my hands into dark rich soil

Because I want to sweat as I labour over the fork

I want to taste the salt as I sweat

I want to smell hard work on my body

I want my muscles to ache

and then be soothed by soft rain

Because I want the open canvas of tilled land

I want the beauty of level earth, prepared

I want honest calluses on my hands

Because I want to feel the rough sleeping seeds

tumble through my fingers into the ground

I want to smooth them over with a blanket of soft loam

I want to watch the birth of green shoots

as they push themselves towards the sun

Because I want to lie next to the garden listening to the plants grow

I want to smell the earth after rain and after sun

I want to nurture the seedlings into plants

support them with poles and trellises

I want to talk them through their adolescence

Because I want to watch flowers pollinated by bees and butterflies

I want to see the first fruit

smell the sun warmth of a fresh tomato

Because I want to crush aromatic basil plants in my arms

I want to feel the heavy stalks of corn against my body

I want to see my hands stained by the chlorophyll of their existence

I want to watch the plants shine in rising vermilion sun

and glow in the silver of a full moon

Because I want to listen to their chatter as they decide their destiny

I want to harvest the fruit of my labour

I want to relish each individual vegetable shape in my hands

drink their beauty with my eyes

Because I want to feel their unique presence in the world

I want to press them against my face to feel their textures

I want know that when I cook them they will be minutes old

clean of pesticides and pollution

and when I serve them

ripe, brilliant and ready on white china

I want to know that you'll be there

Doug Underhill
Stanley Cup Dreams

The Stanley Cup
comes to town
not from any winning
player
but as part of a tour
"Out Of The Blue"
a hundred people
kids and adult kids
lined up
an hour early
close to 500
during the hour and a half
of photos and trivia
My hockey days
now nights
before the TV
with munchies
and a beer
Yet I am excited
I am there first

as a reporter
getting to talk
to Mike Bolt
Hockey Hall of Fame's
Keeper of the Cup
He tells me
to go first
as he sets up
smoke still lingering
from special effects
as Lord Stanley's legacy
is brought in
round, real and shiny
and placed on the stand
"97% silver, 3% nickel
and 100% Canadian"
Bolt talks about mistakes
points out Boston Bruins
spelled with a "Q"
instead of an "O"
Ted Lindsay with two "I's"
Islanders without an "S"
making it all the more

human in what it represents
the Imperfect dreams
of a nation
I am beside it
arm touching cold metal
taking my first strides
on bobskates
on the blue-white world of ice
skating down the wing
through bantam, midget, high school
years of road hockey
Bauers, Tackleberry's
straight Sherbrookes and curved
Kohos
Making it all the way
to Industrial League
and gentleman's hockey
Remembering the break-away
the deke, sliding the puck
behind the goalie
I am holding the Cup
the camera flashes
"Next"
hollers the photographer

as I am pushed away
in the shadow of a dream

Lynn Tait

Table for 2 at Adele's

Red or white wine weekends
peppered with squirrelly antics,
neighbourhood rodents beg
(or pray) for peanuts,
interrupt wine flow
and yakkety-yak friendship,

we pour over literary critiques like talk show hosts,
a backyard salon with guest appearances by
cats and husbands, siblings, sons and daughters,

conduct cheese-aged conversations
cracker-crisp with political intrigue,
fancy ourselves lawn chaired philosophers
solving world-weary dilemmas,
backyard scholars holding life tenure
in suburban academics,

wise beyond the street signs of our dreams,
broken only by the dull drone of lawn mowers,
the un-rhythmic snip and splash of summer.

Elizabeth Symon

Je Chante d'un Pays

Je chante d'un pays,
Terre de montagnes
De glace et de neige
Et d'un soleil au nord.
Le connais-tu?
Je chante de ses mers
Orageuses et profondes
D'une côte et de l'autre,
Et celle de l'Arctique
Chargée de banquises.
Le connais-tu?
Je chante d'une cataracte,
Chute magnifique,
Tonitruante,
Son étourdissant,
Chanson puissante.
La connais-tu?
Je chante des Prairies,
Champs agricoles
Et des tours qui dominant
Ce terrain immense,

Visibles de lointain.

Les connais-tu?

Je chante des forêts

A feuilles persistantes,

Et des érables,

Habitats de la faune,

Héritage précieux.

Les connais-tu?

Je chante des grandes villes,

Historiques et modernes,

Creusets dès longtemps

Des nationalités

Devenues canadiennes.

Les connais-tu?

Je chante d'un pays

Qui aime la paix

Et qui veut l'établir

Dans le monde entier.

C'est mon pays.

Le connais-tu?

Adele Kearns Thomas
Main Street on Saturday

hums
to drumbeat
of the outpouring
 crowd
 locked
into harried haste..
bobbing heads
are like puddings
that come to a boil,
a cross-surge
 at corners
jay walkers
 cutting them
to purposed ends,
pavement blitzed
by touchdown boots
and clunky heels,
a piper flutes
birdlike sweetness

through chattering
stream
of jean wrapped
teeners
shuffle-bound
 unhurried
 no money,
strangled laughs
dangle
between honking horns
and small car toots
green to red lights
 give pause
to perfect strangers
in a jungled din
 of tangled life...

Caitlin Reid
From the End of the Dock

the setting (wonder
ful) sun, smoke and sound
of spoken French crawls
across the lake. At my feet
submerged, I peer and see
I want to be, more
on the other side of this
country, this blue black
water, so still-but, once
there, I will want only
to be here. In this moment
I know green is greener; the
greenest grass can never grow.

Lydia Palij
First snow on the Humber

Wind shattered
red pots of autumn.
Shards turned
into oak leaves
that scoop first snow
on stone steps.
White roof tops
fly beyond the river
where the sun spins
a luminous cocoon.

Lydia Palij
On Lake Ontario

White blotter sky
soaks up water,
leaves no horizon,
no beginning, no end.
Only seagulls

strung unevenly
dot the breakwater
like an unsolved code.

Then a freighter
with black scissors
slices the horizon,
foghorn pierces
dense silence.

Startled seagulls soar,
their wings wipe off
sky borne tears.

Wayne M. Brown

As It Should

My land starts here, the creek sluggish among the reeds;
clusters of frogs' eggs cling to soft grasses, undulating seductively
in slow current, minnows swarming to take their fill. Clay banks
rise, gently at first, interrupted by long moss-covered mounds,
grave sites of fallen giants pointing back from whence they came,
rooted in primordial debris, felled long ago in a blast of nature's anger,
wind or fire; now feeding suckling roots, thousands of saplings

that fight to fill their place. The forest muted, sun-dappled, moist,
ripples with streaks of light slanting incrementally
across the fern and alder tangle, stillness uninterrupted
by foxes padding lightly along brushy highways,
silent as shadows. Here the land is as it always was.

At first, the clear-cut insults the eye, naked and ablaze
with harsh sunlight, its secret places exposed to the elements,
vulnerable as any raw wound. But starting over has
already begun: small shoots of dogwood and red willow
struggle up between steel-scarred sticks and stumps,
rotting and nourishing in the heat. Machines and noise are gone,
replaced by wind, always the wind, the land left to heal
on its own, to spring again into groves of poplar, spruce
and pine, stretching relentlessly upward to the sun, once more
shading the earth, renewing the land and bringing back the deer
to slip through the tangled cover.

Beyond the cut, a line of trees borders the openness,
orange ribbons defending them from saws and blades,
deliberate snow and wind-breaks still protecting long forgotten fields,
dotted now with small spruce and pine where once the urgent seed
struggled to claim a place. The earth heaves gently in grass-covered
waves, vestiges of a final turning of the sod, the homesteader's

last hope for a better year. Forsaken now for fifty years, the cabin
settles back against encroaching forest; only one wall remains,
standing defiant against the frost, dampness and rot that
work relentlessly on axe-hewn logs to return them to the earth.
Lilac and rhubarb still grow lush against the south-facing wall,
ironic reminders that nature ultimately decides what will grow
and where - who will stay or go.
Further west, the fields end against thick poplar, the land
rising abruptly in rock ridges, impervious to those who would
till the ground or cut the wood. Moss grips the rock tentatively,
easily dislodged by a cow moose and her calf that rest here,
backs against the granite, basking in safety and the morning sun,
gazing placidly over the empty fields, unconcerned by mill smoke
drifting upwards twenty miles away.
Gradually, the land becomes as it was -
all will be as it should.

Stella Mazur Preda

Home To Toronto

5:45 p.m.
the milk train out of Halifax
destination ... Toronto, Ontario
rotational rolling gathers speed
Annie's gaze escapes
to the dizzying countryside

beside her a stranger
yet her father
conversation strained
almost non-existent
where to begin after two years?
what to say?
polite inquiries ...
Mother? And the little ones?
The health of grandparents?
reminiscences of yesterdays
never to return

daylight blurs into dusk's rosy hues
and the 5:45 rolls into darkness
tunnels blindly
through the ebony night
and emerges into a new day
sunlight tickles Annie's eyelids
whimsically dances about her face
cradled in her father's bear hug
she peers into pools of liquid green
mirrors reflecting her soul
mourning the time lost

*I had to leave, Annie. I'm sorry.
Just as you had to leave.
A risk, an opportunity to be plucked
like a fresh apple in early fall.
I know you understand, Annie.*

the rhythmic scream of wheels
cold metal grinding
grating cold metal
an unfamiliar irritating song

strains against Annie's ears
Annie scrutinizes this new country
and takes comfort in what she sees
fields of bluest blue waters
linger on the horizon as
tall corn stalks wave their welcome

Gill Foss

Snorkelling Above the S.S. Rhone

(British Virgin Islands)

I hover weightless
above this world
of silent spirits,
viewing the past
with sadness in my eyes.

This sunken hulk
lies broken, with the bones
of long-dead men,
yet dappled now with sun
and darting fish.

I sense the cries of fear
rise like the hurricane
that caused this wreck
and mourn that tragedy, now
reduced to a tourist attraction.

Kathleen Kemp Haynes

Our Canada: the Cabin in the Woods

the trees did not ask what language
you spoke when you appreciated the shade'
when you cut them for warmth,
when you used them for lumber
to build your cabin and shed'
when you pulled their stumps to make fences.
the land you tilled, the fish and game
you caught were the productivity in this land,
where the poor, here and from over the sea, could thrive
and be accepted as landowners and merchants
and citizens rather than peasants.
there were no lords, ladies, counts,
countesses, ducs, here to own and take
the profit from the lands you tilled.
taxes were paid to build roads, schools
hospitals for all, rather than gold-encrusted thrones.
my Scottish ancestors came in 1840,
to what would become Warwick township,
to till the soil and beget twelve children,

two of whom died in childhood.
I still have their quilts, filled with
their own sheep's wool as batting
ingenuity and hard labour made
our country strong and fulfilling.
how many of us would have ever been born
and educated in the poverty, religious strife,
and downright oppression
then widespread in the "old" countries?
for my ancestors, the cabin in the woods,
after unremitting physical exertion to
create a warm, safe home, became
a farm with silos, barn, rolling
productive corn and wheat fields,
cattle, sheep and many children, now
in the seventh generation around the province.
la ferme ou the farm, it really
doesn't matter in the cozy living-room, tired
and satisfied with feet up on a footstool.
so let's have a gateau and café
together and celebrate this nation
we built together.

Lynn Tait

Fishing in Ontario

Something between a sport and a religion Josephine Tey "*The Singing Sands*"

My parents insist I won't have the patience,
convinced I'm wasting my time.
The admonishment ripples and chops,
the sound of carp kissing air.
I thread worms on hooks like popcorn on string.

Along the shallows, my brothers
claim better bait, bigger fish,
over-turn rocks, disturb sand and silt,
scrounge for crayfish that skitter-scatter
gray against a liquid terrain.

I'm content catching perch with bologna bits,
worms for rock bass; and sunfish,
dorsal bristling like finned cats,
are stepped on lightly, my hands too small
to wrangle out hooks by any other means.

At Grandpa's cottage, we travel by boat.
Keep hands in, dangling fingers the favorite snack of hungry pike.
Brothers laugh as I reel in a *loud*-mouth bass.
The water reflects the sun like mica flecks
or the fin flicks of shiners slithering in perforated pails.

In winter, across a still-life horizon of white ice,
make-shift shacks pepper the lake-scape
like thick brush strokes placed wherever.
Within this canvas, sheltered anglers
huddle over small circles of lake,
softly tickling cut-out ice edges,
hooks and breath baited,
wait for silent tugs,
the zip of line and reel,
the sudden stir of silver
slashing deep through blue-black currents,
pulling away from the choking light.

Doug Underhill
Arriving in Newfoundland

Leaving North Sydney, NS
The Cat hovers
out of harbour
to the smell of sea
and distant call of gulls
a tail of foaming froth
dividing green Atlantic
behind
diesel stacks spewing fumes
engines droning
legs feeling the touch of ocean
Several hours and finally
sight of land
Port-aux-Basques
with square white houses
perched on cliffs
in this land of rock
wild roses and shallow graves
where sky and water meet

oblivious to land
Long Range Mountains

hump-backing into clouds
as if land has gone tits up
large earth-warts knuckling from sea
rolling upward
as waves nip shore
hissing
slow chiseling
of rock to sand
beach-line "s"ing
along coast
Ponds pocketing
between stone
as moose bristle
in bogs
scruff Tuckaways
bowing to wind
dead spruce
white-gray skeletons
like vertical driftwood

amid greens and purple fireweed
An island arcing

into cloud
like a huge finback whale
rising from water
In the distance
the Trans-Canada Highway
threading hills
gouged by clear-cuts
across this island
sea-rock
of blueberries, cod tongues
partridgeberries, bakeapples
and fine people.

Katerina Fretwell
I Need a Wilderness

"I need a wilderness that screams/ at the outskirts of language"
Catherine Owen's poem, "Meditations On Wild & Tame"

a wild place that sries
beyond tadpool and frogpond

outside dictionary and grammar
& thoughts jacketed therein

a wetland unclaimed unnamed
with no stake through its heart

no fire no jig to a rig roiling for oil
no putting-green grown over sacred bones

enclave beyond the famed tamed syllables
that goosetep into word

a child-space that flies
in the now of neverland

Section 4

Premonitions of Loss: Shadow of the Legacy.



Becky Alexander

It Took a Village

Hespeler, Ontario

a place now drowned in regionalism

still a beehive

industry, hockey, small town shops,

big heartedness, church spires,

pipe band,

and Santa Claus parades.

In the '50's we'd

swoop home from youth groups

at the old Queen Street church,

race and scream our

heathen hearts, tear down

the middle of streets,

knock on doors,

jump in Mrs. Worsley's hedge.

Party lines, style of the times,

homes and gossip strung together,

we'd open the porch door,

face the wrath of parents
already informed
of hooligan antics
and the wondering aloud
why they bothered to
civilize us with church
and such.

Spent pennies at Hilda's store,
trips to the soda fountain,
five and dime, bookstore,
pipe band competitions,
marching drills,
whispering in the library,
remembering our manners.

Comfort in the knowledge
that we may as well behave,
at least, most of the time
so many eyes and ears
keeping us tight on solid tracks.

Joshua Auerbach

New Breed: Pickering, Ontario

*Danger: high levels of smog & pollutants in the air today
be sure to wear ultraviolet protection even when the sky is grey*

hair catches fire by the roadside
carcasses of mad cows
burn with two-headed
frogs & hermaphroditic toads

the stone wet with cancer
with the blood of rocks, of insects
& us taken into a centrifuge
spun fast, so as

to distill the virus
fish spawn in mercury
fatten in a month
on hormones

the farm in the low valley
catches red rain that
drops into windowpane lakes
without green algae

Joshua Auerbach

Harvest

In the open field
a basket of apples.

Leaves furled & stalks crunched
into lettuce-heaps.

Roots bring up to ground
junk-metals thrown

into the river, near the mountain
with steel mills on its base.

Nightwind
blows past crops

& furrows fill with farmers.
They move in as bonefrost

whitens the skin of earth-fruit,
hardened & ready

Joshua Auerbach

Oasis

We look out onto lakes,
thrushes, bulrushes, & small perch
that glide on mirrored light.

Like waterfalls, runnels from streams,
or glaciers that drift in tidal pools,
we let out gathered steam.

The urge to dive down &
bring up sargassum, sea flowers, green algae,
spawn of two-headed frogs – half-in,

half-out & moving into nether.
So this water is clear,
the air full of leaves, waves carry

driftwood bones washed onto shore.
Two red-breasted black birds fly together
at the call of someone's name.

This flight over old stone,
coal that splinters, brings us
into night; still, lost in the center.

Joshua Auerbach
Making the Body

I/ Inter-act

Light drops to cover
graves, hammers, sickles,
guns, scissors, wire:

garotte, abattoir, bastinado,
a cultural heritage.

The reptilian brain,
cold murder.

II/ Artifice

An industrial stammer
drill, drill to the black sea,
bring this life

to surface. Crush
igneous dolomite
to a pale, white, fossil-memory

Katherine L. Gordon

The End of Vision

Speculating mall and subdivision
suited men clutch valises
plan boxed buildings in neon strips,
erase quaint dwellings, old hills,
green impediments,
modernize access in pavement
transmuting land into cash.
Market checks confirm
names from nature sell best
they will call it Eagle Hill Mall.
A brass eagle will spin
from the roof of the largest
fast-food dispenser.
He will be cast without prominent eyes,
posing no threat to drive-through shoppers
who want to savour the catch-of-the-day
with chips,
no competition from other species
just the tacit protection
of a brass and blind eagle
to connect them to the illusion
of the wild.

Katerina Fretwell

The Sunlit Sea

"The sunlit sea supports nothing but the shadows/ cast by the outstretched wings of birds" from a poem by Guillaume Apollinaire (Catherine Owen, The Wrecks of Eden)

as if black & white dance
on a blue field,
that limitless trick -
that gill nets don't
scour the ocean floor

shore magpies mirror
the flash of black & white
dolphins crooning blue -
down among the dwindling
notes, corals, turtles
and angelfish inhaling silver -
mercurial and indisposed
ancient mariners pluck
the last plankton as
pterodactyls fly the future
bait beneath a sun
more radiant than
melted wax winging home

Gill Foss

Souvenirs d'un Amour

Mes mémoires
resemblent aux feuilles
tombantes
d'automne
qui s'habillent
en couleurs riches
mais teintes
de la tristesse.
Je les garde
dans mon coeur
ces souvenirs d'un amour
éloigne
mais jamais mort.

Becky Alexander

A Penny for Revenge

That summer I was five, my uncle came down from
the north to help my dad in his business of carpentry.
Grasshopper-hung evenings when the peepers
croaked a melancholy chorus from the swamp
across the fence, we'd sit on the falling-in wooden
floor of the gray verandah, listening to tales of living
in the bush, camping out under God's own lights,
eating fish that flopped from lines, on the lucky days.

Hunting wolves and 'coons, their pelts stretched
tight before greenwood fires, pelts that brought
a pretty penny to ward off the lean of winter.
He showed us how to drop pennies through
the knotholes in that worn verandah floor:
"Some day you can dig these up, and maybe
they'll be worth much more than simple coppers."

In time, the old verandah was pulled away,
replaced with pillars and the firmament of concrete.
Now that developers have eaten up the place,
when they pull off that last verandah,
smash up the homestead into skimpy-thin lots,
may they rot like those old gray floorboards,
should they ever dare unearth a single green cent.

Ellen S. Jaffe

Language Lessons

(Poem written after doing a project at Gateway School in Toronto with
Learning Through the Arts of the Royal Conservatory of Music.)

They are from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Somalia,
Oman. We will write poems
about water, I say,
and they hear "poems about war."
Will the U.S. have a war with Pakistan?
Did you hear about the war in Eritrea?
Will the U.S. and Canada have a war?

"Some say the world will end in fire
Some say in ice..."

Cold words by Robert Frost, who knew
destruction when he saw it.

Seven years old, from countries
where water never freezes, except in cubes,
and where dirty water looks like chocolate milk.
We write about water and ice,
life on skates in the Canadian north.
In the classroom, someone aims a rubber band,

someone else spits at his neighbour.

This boy goes to the office in a tantrum,
that girl, like a sad kitten, lost her mittens,
cries she'll be grounded "even on my birthday!"

They are from India, China, Jamaica, Sri Lanka,
from Russia, New Jersey,
now all from Canada.

For some, it's their first Valentine's Day:

gummy red hearts, chocolate kisses.

We write about snow cats, melting –
love, loss, love after loss.

Their words come shyly, from the heart

courageous adventurous trusting

the girl is not alone any more

my mom gives many loves

The wind blows, the water goes

pani, danome, mera, thani, insio

mie, mayim, aue, agua, bani

su, vada, l'eau, szsz, sura –

all the languages we speak have words for water.

Colette Couломbe

Lutte Intérieure

Dès qu'il s'approche je le fuis

Pourtant j'ai tant besoin de lui

Il me réchaufferait le cœur

Mais de lui j'ai tellement peur

Hier complètement détruit

Aujourd'hui loin de lui je vis

Protéger tous mes lendemains

Demain sera jour sans chagrin

À dix ans j'en rêvais toujours

À vingt ans il m'a joué un tour

À trente ans il m'a fait maman

M'abandonnant à mes tourments

Je l'ai cherché, je l'ai trouvé

Je l'ai perdu, j'ai trop pleuré

Même s'il me manque jour après jour

Sans cesse je fuis le grand amour

Vicki Goodfellow Duke

Ode to Canada

Hail my Canada, humble and noble,
fair countenance of graceful dignity.
Gowned in glory austere and feral,
sky-crowned summit, Emerald Falls majesty.
Chaste beauty rare, glaciated north, pines and tides,
sweet yielding field of ochre, fall's maple gold.
Peoples distinct with selfsame quiet pride;
a bold creed and spirit, known yet untold.
Your name Sanctuary, Grand Wilds, Land of Peace.
Your blood it is rich, and your breath blows free.
Your laugh a chanson of fiddle and drum;
you are the end of the earth, and the sun.
You are birth, hope, survival, a victor apart,
hail Canada, royal home of my heart

Joy Hewitt Mann

I Am Having Trouble with My French

My mother, Therese,
hands me English on a plate, like fruit
delicately arranged as on a lettuce leaf . . .
just so.

The words tremble a little, lately, as
my father is doing his own dialysis, his
body a container for the poison's rinse.

Ma mere, Therese,
throws her French at relatives in great gobs,
catching in her flying hands *les mots*
thrown by another.

The words are chili, stew,
the casseroles you make with Hamburger Helper.
You won't find them in a fine
French restaurant.

My father sits, uncomfortably, in a large chair.
He wears suspenders,
not for age, but because huge pants must
accommodate this bag he wears inside himself.

Mon pere is my pear.

I am having trouble with my French.

Edyth V. Harris

Only Today I Understand

Only today I understand
the lesson of yesterday...
Only today I understand
what yesterday held hidden...

I visited you at the Devonshire -
in the visitor's lounge
we had a cup of coffee
Your eyes are dim
I read for you some poems
from my book
You seem distracted
by people passing by
You greet each one
with a cheerful voice
a friendly smile...but none replied....
Later you apologized
for the interruptions explaining
these were special people...

Only today - I understand....
Only today my heart accepts
what yesterday
seemed an offense

Adele Kearns Thomas
Dream
on Air Castles

One lazy afternoon
before sun
slipped
away
from its caring shade,
I built my home
on sultry sand
below
a tumbling
hill
with out-there wood
knotted and wormed,
Every rain-guilty day
water slips through
like contraband
to cellar floor
potato bin

& apple barrel,
to the sulking corner
where it sits...

Jacqueline Borowick
Empreintes Digitales

Lignes et volutes
gravées au bout des doigts
témoignent pour et contre moi,
établissent
le moi qui sort des rangs.

Tracent mon passage
à domicile, à l'étranger,
apposent leur sceau
sur les touches de mon piano,
les pages d'auteurs préférés,
mes poèmes ;
ont imprimé ma réalité
d'écolière, de mère,
femme d'intérieur, de carrière.

Outrepassent le monde physique,
touchent, caressent
les êtres que j'aime,
estampillent sur leur cœur
des empreintes de douceur.

Ayeesha s. Kanji

Silence

Words held in
Tree standing still
Closed mouth
A still face
Still water
Frozen

Mutable
Alone
Sunshine
Green grass

Black
Frozen

Big dipper

Same seat
Same song
Same beat
Small mouth
Frozen

I am remembering

SILENCE

Kate Marshall Flaherty

On Looking at a Krieghoff Exhibition

On Looking at a Krieghoff Exhibition

In the luminous white

of snow blobs stark against the grey-mauve sky,

I slip into the frosty crack in the ice

where children skitter on glace to fetch a bucket and

a horse hoof and dog collide in the hoarfrost.

I am lost in the tiny pinprick beadlines

painted into a minuscule moccasin,

the hair wisp of an ice fishing line.

I am drawn into

the infinitesimal detail

of a stack of logs, Hudson Bay coat,

indian blanket, a stand of naked trees.

(Those same three sashed fellows pop up, again,

hooded, happy, fixed forever rosy in their carefree sled.)

Imagine the hues of a different view:

The crimson raw of a baby's

angry toes in the crust-frozen booties;

the snot of the chopper

breathing ice into his beard and sweaty lip

as he flails his might to cut a cord by dusk;

the groan of the mother as

she heaves her sloshing slop bucket

out from the steamy house and

wipes the greasy fish guts and bloody slime scales

from her embroidered apron;

she sighs for her lost child.

B. O'Donnell

Beef. A Heart-Breaker

Ruts and furrows for spring plantings
Frozen, ready for farmer's plough
So the ground's impassable now
Like beef farmers' extended plight.

Farmers' faces frozen into
Grim ruts and furrows of worry:
"Prospects were bad in the 50's,
But, never times as bad as these!"

Farmland sold, a shrinking island.
The silo broods, tower of gloom.
Barn roofs, jeans patched over again.
Cringe to the Food Bank at month's end.

Steers, oblivious to crises,
Still belly-up to their feed trough,
Unaware that they, young Hansels,
May soon have to be killed off.

Fears and futures suspended like

Ice crystals in the Auction air
Hopeless, bleachers coldly bones-bare.
Bids' red numbers blink with alarm.

Alistair Campbell

Alicante

(For Jacques Prévert)

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| It was Alicante | and he took it |
| la poésie | but he said that |
| my translation | hopefully |
| and he said | it would be for |
| he had no copy anymore | the same person |
| because he'd left it | (hopefully) |
| one morning | So he has |
| on a table | love, words, oranges |
| under an orange | while I have |
| left it | only the words |
| for the woman he'd | though |
| passed the night with . . . | I can get oranges and |
| his only copy. | I've lots of copies |
| | of the words and |
| So I gave him another | they won't all be |
| saying | for the same person |
| he might want to leave it | (hopefully). |
| for someone else | |

T. Anders Carson

Chair Mordue

Accroupie au-dessus d'un livre de plongée,
les courbes souples de mon amante
agrémentent ma vue.
Sa main,
pleine d'innocence et de puissance,
caresse la page
évoquant profondeurs et images.
Les maringouins s'amassent sur sa chair
cherchant subsistance.
Je fais un geste de la main.
Ils lâchent leur emprise
et se dispersent.
Elle paraît surprise,
presque déconcertée
de mon tendre geste.
Je n'ai pas le coeur de lui dire
que c'est moi
qui désire taquiner
sa chair tendre
de morsures.

Sheldon Birnie

Winter Winds

| | |
|---|---|
| let us get drunk together on the finest Canadian whiskey we can find I will mix your drinks you can mix mine and before we know it we will be drunk indeed | let me kiss you once as I should have those years ago and let us forget all that has passed and let me make love to you as I could not have then and when it is over |
| let us lay down together beneath warm sheets as the winter winds whip snow against the walls that enwrap us | let us keep each other warm against the world we both know can be colder than any winter winds either of us have ever imagined |

Keith Garebian

The Lake

The couple from Pickering look out at the dusky water
and see a peace they cannot find at home.
'We have fifteen minutes before the mosquitoes,'
she warns, sipping on a cocktail, as he rises to fetch her shawl.
Nipped by the air, I pull a towel over my legs
and scan the shoreline
where firs and hemlock impose themselves
on the rocky relics of a glacier age.
'I see a dragon,' says the quietly awed visitor
from Singapore. He's not looking only
from an Asian point of view; there is a long green creature
with a hilly back and taut neck, snout and trailing tail
which sprawls across the skyline.
Crazy Canucks on jet skis and speed-boats
churn the lake, spraying geysers
in perverse arcs, their chaotic wake
racing to the harbour where the tethered boats
have a sudden seizure,
bucking against the dock in an uproar.

The visiting Yanks gaze in awe
as the wind gains and bends the water.
Tall reeds grow from the dark ooze,
their thin fingers reaching for the light
above the bones of sea creatures.
The cottages have sunk roots
into rock and shell,
and there's no doubt about their purpose:
they have the tenacious grip of a millionaire,
a lust based on greed, not pure, natural love.
Soon the moon will cast its net of white diamonds
and the newly weds from Ohio
will have their faces flushed with colour.
The lake repeats its lapping sound
as, braced by the breeze,
we are all watching a different water.

Marie-Lucie Pelletier

La Peur de la Mort

Je suis perdue, je ne sais plus
qui je suis - je me rue dans la peur
et dans le noir.
J'espère qu'il ne sera pas toujours
ainsi, car je veux oublier les ennuis,
les cris, les pleurs soulageant
ton coeur. Car je ne suis pas
partie pour toujours. Je ne veux
pas que tu oublies les journées
passées au soleil, le vent de la mer
qui jouait dans tes cheveux
couleur de miel.
Les bateaux, le métro, les avions,
le train, l'hélicoptère et l'auto sont
des moyens de transport dont on a
besoin
mais l'amour dans nos coeurs
n'a pas besoin de tout ça.
Car l'amour peut voler comme
une flèche jusqu'en ton coeur.
Les fleurs, les abeilles, les animaux

sont là, près de nous. Car nous
avons besoin d'eau pour toute
la nature qui est si belle.
Mais l'handicapé, il voit tout ça.
Bien qu'il soit sourd et muet,
il a toujours un sourire
au visage quand il regarde la mer.
L'odeur de la nature sent si bon.
Alors la mentalité est dépourvue
de tous pouvoirs qui peuvent
être enlevés avec les médicaments.
On vit dans le noir pendant
un certain temps.
La clinique nous pique, elle
est là pour nos besoins.
Les docteurs sont là pour nous aussi.
Mais rien n'est à l'épreuve
de la mort, car Dieu seul
peut venir nous chercher.

Norma West Linder
Lost Heritage

That big barn was the life-blood of the farm
its beams adze-marked with signatures of pride.
Swallows once darted through its wagon doors
and crisscrossed gracefully from side to side.
In summer, children slept high in its loft
on ticking stuffed with aromatic hay
while far below the gentle horses neighed
and shadows chased rainbows of chaff away.

Now the old barn looks haunted in the dusk.
Open to wind and sky, it stands alone
empty of all the life that teemed within
forgotten and forlorn, the symbol of
an early tie between the earth and man
as one more highway suffocates the land.

Authors in Order of Appearance

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| James Deahl | Sheila Martindale |
| John B. Lee | Wayne Ray |
| I.B. Iskov | Elana Wolff |
| Jacqueline Borowick | T. Anders Carson |
| Vanna Tessier | Philomene Kocher |
| Wayne M. Brown | Stella Mazur Preda |
| Tracy Lynn Repchuk | April Bulmer |
| Norma Linder | Elizabeth Symon |
| Joan McGuire | Karen P. Ouelette |
| Nancy Morrey | Dorothy Mahoney |
| Anna Panunto | Lenore Langs |
| Hope Morritt | Marie Groundwater |
| Peggy Fletcher | Ellen S. Jaffe |
| Richard I. Thorman | Malca Litovitz |
| Katherine L. Gordon | Colette Coulombe |
| Gill Foss | Allan Briesmaster |
| Ronnie R. Brown | Doug Underhill |
| Jill Battson | Lynn Tait |

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